

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-15 SY-04 FBIE-00 ACDA-10 OMB-01 CIEP-02

OC-05 CCO-00 DRC-01 IO-10 EB-06 COME-00 SIL-01 LAB-03

OPR-02 FAA-00 DOTE-00 AGR-10 SWF-01 SCSE-00 SCA-01

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P R 181130Z OCT 74

FM AMCONSUL BELFAST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 730

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

USNAVCOMMSTA LONDONDERRY

UNCLAS BELFAST 158

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, U.K. (N.I.)

SUBJECT: ARSON WAVE AS POST PRISON RIOT VIOLENCE CONTINUES IN

ULSTER

REF: (A) BELFAST 157 (B) BELFAST 155

1. ARSON SEEMED BE CHOSEN WEAPON OF TACTICAL CONCENTRATION FOR OCT. 17-18 IN CONTINUING AFTERMATH LONG KESH MAZE RIOT OCT. 15. THERE SOME 20 FIRES THROUGHOUT PROVINCE DURING AFTERNOON AND THROUGHOUT NIGHT. SOME OF THESE FIRES WERE BUSES AND AUTOMOBILES IN CONJUNCTION WITH BARRICADES. HOWEVER THERE AT LEAST FOUR MAJOR INCENDIARIES DURING NIGHT INCLUDING FIVE BUSES AT DEPOT BALLYMONEY, THREE TRUCKS WITH FOOD PROVISIONS ARMAGH AREA AND TWO MAJOR DOWNTOWN BUILDINGS BELFAST. SETTING MAJOR FIRES OBVIOUSLY WELL PLANNED AND COORDINATED AND INTERPRETATION THEY MANIFESTATIONS SPONTANEOUS PROTEST AGAINST DETENTION CAN BE UNCLASSIFIED

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EXCLUDED. FIGHTING CONTINUED BETWEEN DEMONSTRATORS AND TROOPS

IN CATHOLIC AREAS BELFAST AND THERE TWO CLASHES BETWEEN PROTESTANT AND CATHOLIC MOBS. TROOPS TO BE REINFORCED BY 500 MEN BRINGING TOTAL ON BOARD ULSTER TO ABOUT 15,100. THERE LARGE VOLUME REPORTS THAT ARMY ENGAGED IN MASSIVE ARREST OPERATIONS "LIFTING" BELFAST CATHOLIC AREAS NIGHT OCT. 17-18.

2. PUBLIC OPINION ON DETENTION HARDENING ALONG SECTARIAN LINES AS VIOLENCE CONTINUES. SPOKESMEN FOR MINORITY COMMUNITY CONTINUE PRESS FOR COMPLETE END DETENTION OR INTERNMENT (USED SYNONYMOUSLY) WHILE LOYALIST UTTERANCES NOW TRENDING TO CALL FOR REORGANIZATION OF SYSTEM PRIMARILY ALONG LINE SEPARATION DIFFERENT CATEGORIES PRISONERS. SECSTATE REES STATEMENTS EVENING OCT. 17 AND MORNING OCT. 18 INDICATE CURRENT NEGATIVE ATTITUDES TOWARD END OF DENTENTION SOON AND EVEN TOWARD ACCELERATED RELEASE RATE. OCT. 17 HE SPOKE OF UNWILLINGNESS TAKE CHANCE OF PUTTING BRITISH TROOPS AT RISK. MORNING OCT. 18 ON BBC-4 NORTHERN IRELAND HE DESCRIBED HIS POSITION AS REFUSAL PUT "SECURITY FORCES" AT RISK BY RELEASE VIOLENT DETAINEES. THERE GROWING CRITICISM OF REES AMONG CATHOLICS INCLUDING SDLP AND "REES MUST GO CAMPAIGN BEGINNING BE ORCHESTRATED.

3. STORMONT ANNOUNCEMENT MORNING OCT. 18 CARRIED NEWS TWO COMPOUNDS LOYALIST PRISONERS LONG KESH WOULD HAVE SOME VISITING AND FOOD PARCEL PRIVILEGES RESTORED OCT. 21. BBC-4 OCT. 18 CARRIED TAPE INTERVIEW WITH LOYALIST WHO INMATE LONG KESH OCT. 15-16. HE LAID BLAME FOR START LONG KESH RIOT SOLELY ON PROVISIONAL REPUBLICAN CONVICTS JOINED LATER BY OFFICIAL IRA CONVICTS. ACCORDING HIS VERSION BRITISH TROOPS DID NOT ENTER PRISON UNTIL DAYLIGHT (APPX. 0700) OCT. 16 AND SUBDUE REPUBLICANS ONLY AFTER THREE HOURS FIGHTING.

4. GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICE RELEASED REVISED CASUALTY FIGURES OCT. 17. THERE BETWEEN 21 AND 24 CONVICTS HOSPITALIZED AND MEDIA SOURCES REPORTED MUCH OF AMBULANCE AND HELICOPTER TRAFFIC OCT. 16 WAS IN TRANSPORTING INJURED TO HOSPITALS FOR X-RAY EXAMINATIONS. STILL NO RPT NOT AMCITS KNOWN BE AFFECTED.

5. MASS ULSTER POPULATION CARRYING ON BUSINESS AS USUAL DESPITE SECURITY SITUATION. THEIR SPIRIT FURTHER TESTED BY NEWS OCT. 17 THAT LARGEST EMPLOYER IN PROVINCE HARLAND AND WOLFF SHIPYARD EXPECTING 33 MILLION POUNDS LOSS THIS YEAR, THAT BRITISH UNCLASSIFIED

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CALEDONIAN AIRLINE TERMINATING BELFAST SERVICE AND THAT CURRENT STRIKE BAKERY DELIVERY WORKERS WILL LEAVE MANY AREAS OF NORTHERN IRELAND WITHOUT BREAD FOR FORESEEABLE FUTURE. SPICER

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